

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SS-15 SP-02 PM-04 L-03 EB-07

INR-07 PRS-01 H-02 MC-02 /054 W

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P 240805Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5646

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5300

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FOR CONSTABLE, NEA/PAB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT REQUEST

REF: LONDON 7944, STATE 125584, ISLAMABAD 5130

1. THANKS FOR THE PROMPT REPLY TO OUR CABLE ON PRESS GUIDANCE ON THE A-7 REQUEST. WE WERE NOT AWARE THAT IT IS WELL-KNOWN IN TRADE CIRCLES THAT A REQUEST HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE AND CAN APPRECIATE CREDIBILITY PROBLEM YOU FACE.

2. ON RELATED ISSUE, LONDON REFTEL ASKS PERMISSION TO PASS BRITS' COMPLETE A-7 REQUEST CONTAINED IN OUR 5130. DEPARTMENT'S DECISION ON THIS ISSUE WILL OBVIOUSLY DEPEND ON HOW YOU DECIDE TO HANDLE A-7 REQUEST PUBLICLY. OUR OWN VIEW IS AS FOLLOWS.

3. WE SEE NO PROBLEM IN INFORMING UK OF GENERAL FACT THAT GOP REQUESTED LOA ON A-7S. AS YOU NOTE, THE WORD IS AROUND WASHINGTON IN ANY CASE AND THIS IS CERTAINLY THE KIND OF INFORMATION WE CAN SHARE WITH AN ALLY. HOWEVER, WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT PASSING THE ENTIRE PAK REQUEST, AS SPELLED OUT IN OUR 5130, TO THE BRITS. LONDON REFTEL IMPLIES WE ARE OBLIGATED TO PASS ENTIRE A-7

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REQUEST TO UK SINCE THEY HAVE GIVEN US THE LIST OF

PAKISTANI ARMS REQUESTS THEY RECEIVED FROM GOP. THIS WEEK WE WILL BE PASSING UK EMBASSY THE GENERAL LIST WHICH WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM GOP. THAT LIST, HOWEVER, DOES NOT CONTAIN ANY AIRCRAFT REQUESTS. WITHOUT TRYING TO SOUND LIKE PHILADELPHIA LAWYERS, WE DO CONTEND THAT THE QUESTION OF PASSING THE A-7 INFORMATION SHOULD THEREFORE BE VIEWED AS AN ENTIRELY SEPARATE ISSUE FROM OUR AGREEMENT TO EXCHANGE THE GENERAL ARMS REQUESTS LISTS WE HAVE EACH RECEIVED. AS FCO REP TOLD LONDON EMBOFF THE LIST TRADE WAS A "ONE-TIME AD HOC OPERATION AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A PRECEDENT." THIS WAS CERTAINLY THE UNDERSTANDING AND WE THEREFORE ARE UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO PASS TO THE UK THE COMPLETE A-7 REQUEST INCLUDING NUMBERS, DELIVERY TIMES, MUNITIONS, ECM DESIRED, ETC.

4. IN ABSENCE OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE UK TO EXCHANGE ALL INFORMATION ON ARMS REQUESTS, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD INFORM UK OF GENERAL A-7 REQUEST BUT SHOULD NOT PASS ON ALL THE PARTICULARS OF WHAT IS BEING ASKED FOR. WE SEE NO ADVANTAGE TO DOING LATTER AND SOME COMMERCIAL DIS-ADVANTAGES IF WE GIVE THEM THE INFORMATION. AS A GENERAL RULE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO SHARE ALL AND COMPLETE LOA REQUESTS FROM THE GOP WITH THE UK; GIVING THEM ALL THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN OUR REFTEL WOULD SET JUST SUCH A PRECEDENT.

5. WE WOULD ALSO ASK THAT ANY INFORMATION WE PASS TO THE UK ON US ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN BE HANDLED EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR ISLAMABAD. WE BELIEVE THAT WE AND THE DEPARTMENT HAVE THE NECESSARY BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION TO ENGAGE IN SUCH EXCHANGES WHICH MAY BE AUTHORIZED IN THE FUTURE, AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY THE VENUE FOR PASSING INFORMATION TO THE UK SHOULD NOT BE SHIFTED TO LONDON. WE WOULD PREFER IF WE WERE MADE RESPONSIBLE SINCE THIS IS THE PRECEDENT WE ARE SETTING WITH GIVING UK EMBASSY HERE THE GENERAL PAKISTAN ARMS REQUEST LIST.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY AIRCRAFT, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ISLAMA05300
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760201-0126
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760521/aaaaascv.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 76 LONDON 7944, 76 STATE 125584, 76 ISLAMABAD 5130
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AIRCRAFT REQUEST
TAGS: MASS, PK, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006